



## Drowning Prevention Tips for Children Ages 6-11 Years

Your school-age child may be a good swimmer, but still needs supervision around the water. In an emergency, your child may be unable to swim or get to a safe spot. Continue to reinforce how to be water safe.

### At Home:

- Be alert to the danger of slips and falls in the bathroom.
- Begin a “no trespassing” system. Allow family members to bathe with the door unlocked.
- Children with a special condition or seizures need constant supervision during baths.

### In the Yard:

- Pool and spa areas are off-limits unless there is an adult to supervise.
- Close and lock gates when pool, hot tub or spa is not in use. Add a fourth side to the fence, as well as a power safety cover and/or door alarms.
- Keep your child's long hair away from suction drain covers in spas or hot tubs.

### In and Near the Water:

- Children 6 to 11 years old most often drown while swimming or playing in or near lakes or rivers.
- No matter how capable your child seems, focused adult supervision is still essential. Assign adults to watch children near water at social gatherings.
- Have your child wear a life vest, also called a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD), on a dock, boat, raft, inner tube or around deep, swift water like river banks.
- Buy your child a life vest that fits. There may not always be one to rent or borrow.

- Teach your child about water hazards like river currents, cold water, rip tides, slippery river banks and sudden drop-offs.
- Give praise when rules are obeyed.
- Restrict water play if the rules are broken.
- If your child hasn't started swimming lessons, enroll him in lessons or find a friend to teach him.
- Swimming in lakes, rivers or salt water requires extra precautions. Wear a life vest or swim in a lifeguarded area.
- Teach your child to swim or play around water only when an adult is watching.
- Teach your child to dive and jump safely. Check that water is at least nine feet deep and that there are no hidden hazards.

### On a Boat:

- Have everyone fasten life vests before going out on the dock to go boating. Keep life vests on while in the boat. Practice wearing life vests in the water. Children under age 13 are required by law to wear life vests.
- Put school-age kids in charge of checking that there are life vests that fit each person on board.
- With a canoe or raft in shallow water, show children how quickly a boat can tip.
- Practice what to do if the boat tips over.
- Go to shore when changing places in small boats to avoid tipping.

**Remember: Nothing replaces constant adult supervision.**

### For More Information

- Talk with your health care provider
- Visit the Washington State Drowning Prevention Network Web site: [www.seattlechildrens.org/dp](http://www.seattlechildrens.org/dp)